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SUBJECT: CTC DEBATES VISITS, COUNTERTERRORISM INSTRUMENTS

¶1. (SBU) BEGIN SUMMARY: At its 182nd meeting on April 5, the Security Council's Counterterrorism Committee (CTC) discussed the Counterterrorism Executive Directorate's (CTED) coordination with international, regional and sub-regional organizations; a CTED analysis of the status of adoption of the 13 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism; a proposal for CTED to visit Denmark; and the draft report on CTED's November 2006 visit to India. Francis Delon, General Secretary for National Defense of France, also briefed the CTC on a French white paper, outlining the country's counterterrorism strategy. END SUMMARY.

Follow-Up to the CTC's Meetings with International, Regional, and Subregional Organizations

¶2. (SBU) CTED presented a report on its follow-up to the CTC's four previous special meetings with international, regional, and subregional organizations. The report included a summary of the objectives stated in the meetings' outcome documents: 1) institutionalization of relations; 2) information-sharing; 3) development and promotion of best practices; 4) facilitation of technical assistance; and 5) coordination of visits to Member States. Several delegations supported CTED's proposal to engage in increased information sharing, but cautioned that those efforts should not focus on negotiating memoranda of agreement or other legalistic documents, which could become overly bureaucratic or time-consuming.

¶3. (SBU) CTED explained that while the information-sharing process would not be overly cumbersome, some organizations require special arrangements before they exchange information. Some delegations questioned a CTED proposal to seek donor funds to cover the costs of including representatives of international technical and regional organizations on CTED's state visits, arguing that CTED should focus on seeking funds to facilitate actual technical assistance. CTED will revise the report to incorporate CTC members' comments.

Analysis of the Status of Adoption of Relevant International Conventions and Protocols

¶4. (SBU) CTED presented its analysis of the status of states' adoption of international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, which the CTC had requested as part of the Council's comprehensive review of CTED in December 2006. CTED's analysis evaluated implementation by region, and concluded that rates of accession are highest in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and have increased significantly overall since 2001. However, CTED said that progress in the area of ratification did not necessarily translate into implementation on the ground.

¶15. (SBU) Several delegations questioned CTED's conclusion that the reservations some states have taken to the conventions and protocols, including ones to carve out "national liberation" movements or to maintain the political offense exception, have undermined the effectiveness of these instruments in those states. Qatar, for example, with support from Indonesia, noted that state reservations are valid and must not be portrayed as problematic. Other delegations, including France, Italy, the UK, and the United States, supported CTED's substantive point concerning reservations and suggested that CTED continue to explore the issue.

Proposed visit to Denmark

¶16. (SBU) Qatar again tabled its proposal for CTED to visit Denmark, arguing that the CTC has chosen arbitrarily to visit only developing countries. Qatar argued that Denmark's significant experience in countering terrorism and its previous role chairing the CTC made it a good candidate for a visit. Several delegations, including the UK, Slovakia, and France, maintained their positions that the CTC should not discuss any further visits until after CTED had concluded Preliminary Implementation Assessments (PIAs) for all states.

In the absence of consensus on the issue, Panamanian Perm Rep, Chairman Arias, deferred discussion on the visit until next year.

Visit to India

¶17. (U) The CTC discussed the report on CTED's visit to India.

Some delegations expressed concern with some of the recommendations of the report. In particular, South Africa requested that recommendations concerning a federal police force and the strengthening of immigration services be removed. Others cautioned that the CTC should not interfere with CTED's expert conclusions. Additionally, UKUN suggested that the report incorporate a timeline for the recommendations.

France's Counterterrorism White Paper

¶18. (SBU) Francis Delon, General Secretary for National Defense in France, briefed the CTC on a white paper, outlining France's counterterrorism strategy. Published one year ago, the paper focuses on "Islamist-based global terrorism," and outlines France's strategic, operational, and educational objectives. Delon welcomed the work done by the CTC and CTED, and encouraged more frequent country visits and enhanced cooperation with regional organizations. Delon stressed the need to counter Islamist propaganda through international organizations such as UNESCO, and highlighted the need to address the rights of the victims of terrorism. Qatar, as it has when previous speakers have addressed the CTC, argued that the increase in global terrorism reflects the international community's failure to address root causes of terrorism such as foreign occupation.

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